

1. (currently amended) A method of power control for a transmitter in a cellular communication system comprising the steps of:

~~in a first mode of operation~~

determining power control data in response to a quality parameter of a communication

between a base station and a communication unit, and

communicating the power control data between the base station and the communication unit;

entering a reduced power mode of operation by communicating power down power control

data between the base station and the communication unit;

operating in the reduced power mode by communicating power control data corresponding to

a reduced transmit power level; and

exiting the reduced power mode by communicating power up power control data between the

base station and the communication unit.

2. (original) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the power control is an uplink power control and the power control data is transmitted from the base station to the communication unit.

3. (original) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the power control is a downlink power control and the power control data is transmitted from the communication unit to the base station.

4. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any previous~~ claim 1 wherein the reduced transmit power level is substantially zero.
5. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any previous~~ claim 1 wherein the power control data communicated in the reduced power mode is power down control values.
6. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any previous~~ claim 1 wherein the reduced transmit power level allows a reduced data rate communication between the communication unit and the base station.
7. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any previous~~ claim 1 wherein the step of exiting comprises transmitting power up power control data until the transmit power corresponds to a power level determined in response to the quality parameter.
8. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any previous~~ claim 1 to 6 wherein the step of exiting comprises transmitting power up power control data until the transmit power corresponds to a power level corresponding to the power level prior to entering the reduced power mode.
9. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any previous~~ claim 1 wherein a duration of the reduced power mode is less than a data re-transmission interval associated with the communication between the communication unit and the base station.

10. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any previous~~ claim 1 further comprising the step of determining that a quality level of the communication between the communication unit and the base station cannot be achieved, and in response entering the reduced power mode.

11. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any previous~~ claim 1 further comprising the step of determining that a transmit power of the transmitter exceeds a threshold and in response entering the reduced power mode.

12. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any previous~~ claim 1 further comprising the step of determining that an interference level exceeds a threshold and in response entering the reduced power mode.

13. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any previous~~ claim 1 further comprising the step of determining that a propagation characteristic exceeds a threshold and in response entering the reduced power mode.

14. (original) A method as claimed in claim 13 wherein the propagation characteristic is a path loss of a communication link supporting the communication between the communication unit and the base station.

15. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any previous~~ claim 1 further comprising the step of determining that a duration of the reduced power mode exceeds a threshold and in response exiting the reduced power mode.

16. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any previous~~ claim 1 further comprising the step of determining that a quality characteristic of a data communication between the communication unit and the base station is improving and in response exiting the reduced power mode.

17. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any previous~~ claim 1 further comprising the step of determining that an interference level is below a threshold and in response exiting the reduced power mode.

18. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any previous~~ claim 1 further comprising the step of determining that a propagation characteristic is below a threshold and in response exiting the reduced power mode.

19. (original) A method as claimed in claim 17 wherein the propagation characteristic is a path loss of a communication link supporting the communication between the communication unit and the base station.

20. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any previous~~ claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

determining an expected interference level for a plurality of communication units including the communication unit;

determining a total expected interference level; and

entering the communication unit into the reduced power mode if the total expected interference level exceeds a threshold.

21-23. (canceled).

24. (currently amended) An apparatus for power control for a transmitter in a cellular communication system, the apparatus comprising:

means for, ~~in a first mode of operation~~, determining power control data in response to a quality parameter of a communication between a base station and a communication unit;
and;

means for communicating the power control data between the base station and the communication unit;

means for entering a reduced power mode of operation by communicating power down power control data between the base station and the communication unit;

means for operating in the reduced power mode by communicating power control data corresponding to a reduced transmit power level; and

means for exiting the reduced power mode by communicating power up power control data between the base station and the communication unit.